



## The Illinois Department of Corrections

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### **IDOC Applauds Staff Efforts During Flood Emergency**

CHESTER, IL – The IDOC is applauding the efforts of staff and offenders who worked around the clock to help Menard Correctional Center and communities across Illinois brace for the winter flood. The National Weather service predicted the Mississippi River, along Kaskaskia Street, in Menard would crest at 49.7 feet, which matched the levels recorded in the floods of 1993. At that level, Menard Correctional Center could have experienced minor flooding inside the lower level cell houses and basements of buildings located behind the walls.

Many IDOC employees gave up scheduled vacation and personal benefit days to make sure the facility could maintain secure operations during the emergency event. They worked to implement strategic plans, find alternate housing for offenders, remove furniture from buildings, and install equipment to make sure power and food supplies were not compromised. Their diligence helped keep flood waters from entering the cell houses.

IDOC offender work crews were instrumental in helping communities build make-shift levees to protect from flooding. Seven hundred offenders from Menard and Jacksonville Correctional Centers, the Green County Work Camp, and the Du Quoin and Dixon Springs Impact Incarceration Programs filled more than 135-thousand sandbags to minimize the impact at the prison and the communities of Meredosia, Petersburg, Beardstown, Big Swan Levee District, Olive Branch, Union County, and the Valley City Drainage District.

The IDOC also commends the offenders who were placed in alternate housing during the emergency event. They were extremely cooperative and understanding for the duration of their displacement. Staff at the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Department of Natural Resources, the Illinois State Police, and the City of Chester also provided hundreds of hours of manpower to help prepare for this flood.

The Mississippi River crested at just under 46 feet at Menard Correctional Center on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Menard Correctional Center is in the process of returning to normal operations. Visits will resume once flood waters recede and roads in the area are safe to travel.

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